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ABSTRACT

A minority group is a social category involving a clearly differentiated subpopulation within a larger collectivity on the basis of some common set of characteristics which are negatively evaluated by the dominant members of the collectivity. The following characteristics are attributed to negative evaluation: (1) members experience pejorative treatment (patterned negative prejudice and social discrimination): (2) members share a common social identity and are sensitized to their common negative status and to patterns of ill treatment: (3) members have evolved leaders and interest organizations which attempt to represent the interests of the category as they interpret them. Most ethnic and racial groups fit this definition as do nonethnic status categories such as "Women" and "Teenagers." Being ranked in terms of negative status directly reduces social honor and produces an impression of reduced social worth. Often, members of minority groups do not demonstrate structured patterns of behavior or orientation toward common goals. It is not unusual for members of minority group organizations to differ in how they perceive the minority group's interest or in the goals they establish for majority-minority group relations. This variability in goals reflects the diversity of interests, views, and aspirations existing among those who are included in the social category. The inability to achieve social solidarity prevents the minority group from breaking the structural chains of negative status. (CM)

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STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE DETERMINATION OF NEGATIVE SOCIAL STATUS: CONCEPTUAL REFLECTIONS ON THE NOTION OF MINORITY GROUP STATUS.

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Paper presented at the 1980 annual meetings of the Association for Humanist Sociology, Louisville, Kentucky, October 9-12. This paper represents a synthesis and expansion of conceptual frames presented in my AHS Presidential Address, "Negative Status, Social Categories, And Structural Inhumanity" and in my paper, "Minority Group Orientations: Are Rural Mexican American Youth Assimilation-Prone Or Pluralistic?" both of which were presented at the 1979 AHS annual meetings in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. I want to dedicate this paper to all the students who have participated with me in the study of minority groups at Texas A&M University. Their probing questions contributed greatly to the thought needed to produce this paper. Also, I want to acknowledge the assistance of Jody Tyler of the Department of Rural Sociology, Texas A&M, for typing this manuscript.

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Reflections On Conceptions Of Social Reality

Social reality is extremely variable in an objective sense, and, even more so, when the subjective elements of the senses and cognitions of the observor are also taken into consideration. But, it is our job as sociologist to simplify the social universe by discovering the subjectively perceived reflections of the objective elements that are patterned. There is no doubt in my mind that this is a task well worth the difficult labors involved. Without the ability to simplify the apparently chaotic external universe, individual human beings are prone to be reactive to their enviornment, rather than aggressively assertive in contesting it. We must be able to comprehend patterns and postulate connections among these before we are able to reflect intelligently on how one set of conditions in one time frame relate to another set of conditions in another time frame. Perhaps whether we really understand the "true reality" is not as important as whether or not we think we can understand it. For if we didn't believe we could, why would we try? If we are to influence human circumstances, we first must believe we can understand how they come about and how they change. The concepts we employ are important in this task: they either help us to understand more clearly the important patterns of activity we search for or they hinder our vision.

The purpose of this piece is to attempt to develop a rather concise, logically consistent conceptual frame to guide observations of and theorizing about the structural sources and the social consequences of negative social status. It is my contention that by and large "normal" sociological treat-

ments of social rank focus on variations along a positive continuum and, consequently, provide only a narrow and partial understanding of social reality. In my judgement, this widespread conceptual bias within sociology does much to confuse and confound our understandings about structural sources of inhumanity widely exhibited among all kinds of social entities. Our gropings in this regard are clearly evidenced in our still somewhat fuzzy and imprecise notions of "minority groups" and "majority-minority group relations."

For the most part I will limit myself in this effort to conceptual analyses of macro social units, usually a society. For purposes of illustration I will rely on the empirical universe at this level I know best: my own society as it exists at this point in time. I will note any deviations from these two general understandings with you.

Social Differentiation And Social Rank

To understand anything viewed in reality as a whole it is necessary to view it as consisting of parts at least analytically. If this "thing" or entity is thought of as being alive - as living - the parts are thought of as intimately interpenetrating with each other and with the whole in a systematic way. This is the notion of system. If this thing is a human social entity - a society, a city, or an army - we can refer to it as a social system. While many in sociology find fault with this view of social reality, particularly when assumptions are made about functions of parts for the persistence of the larger whole, I personally find this perspective toward social reality relatively consistent with how most human beings understand social reality to be and how most sociologists orient themselves toward the universe they study, whether they admit this or not. Consequently, I find it a fruitfull way to approach an understanding of society.

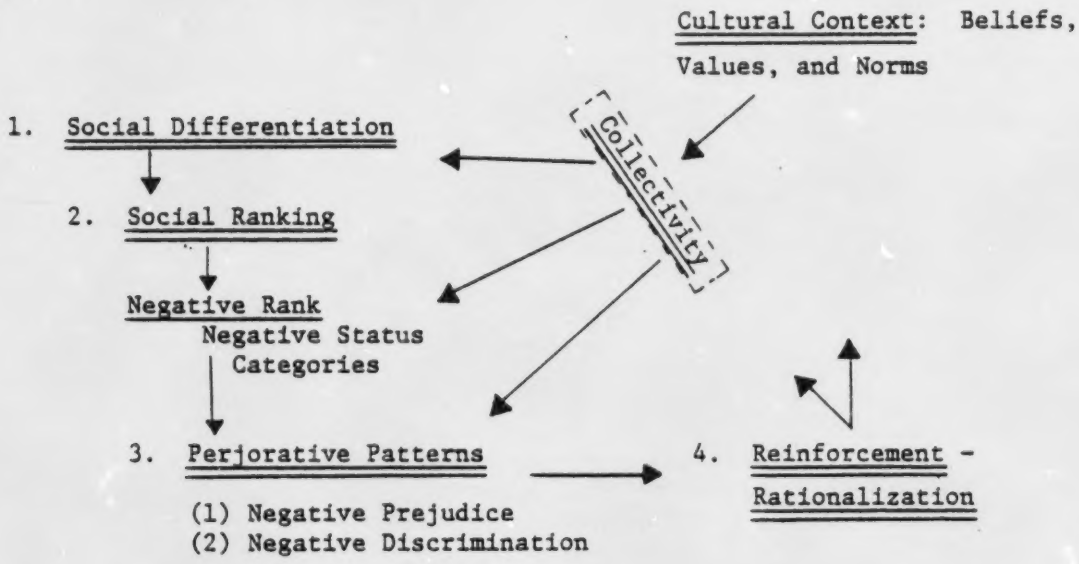
Society as I see it can vary in the extent to which it has system attributes: the extent to which the differentiated parts are interpenetrating inclusively. Small, relatively stable, and homogeneous societies may be like tightly wound little balls of humanity. However, at the other extreme, societies such as ours - large, dynamic, diverse - are probably just barely hanging together. This kind of a society must be viewed as a relatively loose system, only partially and incompletely organized in a fluid frame of relationships and dynamic interpenetrations.

Of course there are a number of ways of dividing the whole up into parts. We can talk about analytical structures or institutional orders.[1] We can think of levels of social organization or functionally specific types of units.[2] All of these modes of differentiation are important and have utility in understanding particular social processes. However, I am not going to attempt to discuss thoroughly all the possible alternatives. My major interest here is to examine how the collectivity (i.e., the collection of people) associated with a society are sorted out by structured social processes into various socially relevant categories.

I think all people in all societies at all times seek ways of differentiating themselves from others in their society. And because I believe that ethnocentrism is universal, a natural byproduct of primary socialization, I also believe it is easy to reason that social ranking follows quite naturally. This set of natural, master social processes eventually leads to the institutionalization of negative rank categories as I depict in Figure 1.

Social differentiation logically, if not actually, preceeds social ranking. Put simply it is the process of labeling subpopulations of the larger collectivity as different from the rest in some important way because of actual or presumed

Figure 1. Master Social Process Involved In Producing Negative Status Categories Within A Culturally Bounded Collectivity



shared common characteristics: physical appearance, behavioral patterns, style of life, cultural traits, organizational affiliation, histroical origins, and etc. (Figure 2). Put simply it is the process of creating or constructing social categories from the total universe of families or individuals associated with the macro entity (i.e., society). It is this process that provides the basis for our notions of social units we label "racial groups", "ethnic groups", "communities", and "social classes." The exact nature of social differentiation is determined by the belief and value structures existing in the generally shared cultural configuration of the macro social organization (see Figure 1). Consequently, exactly what social categories will be seen to exist will depend on these cultural elements and can vary from cultural context to cultural context. Likewise the social meaning or significance of the differences among social categories generally perceived to exist can vary in the same manner across cultures of different societies, or, across time for a given society if relevant beliefs and values change. Consequently, the social differences that are perceived to exist and the meaning attached to them are dependent on shared cultural understandings.

Social ranking is the process by which social categories are evaluated along a continuum of superior-inferior social honor relative to each other (Figure 3). In my judgement this is a much more complex process in social reality than sociologists have realized or acknowledged in their theorizing and research about social stratification: too often this process is seen as unidimensional and all encompassing within the boundaries of a given society. It is my understanding of reality that there are multiple dimensions - many of them - of social ranking operating simultaneously in any macro social entity and that these interpenetrate with each other in various ways and in differing degrees (see Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 2. The Common Pattern Of Sociological Analysis Of Society And Other Macro Units

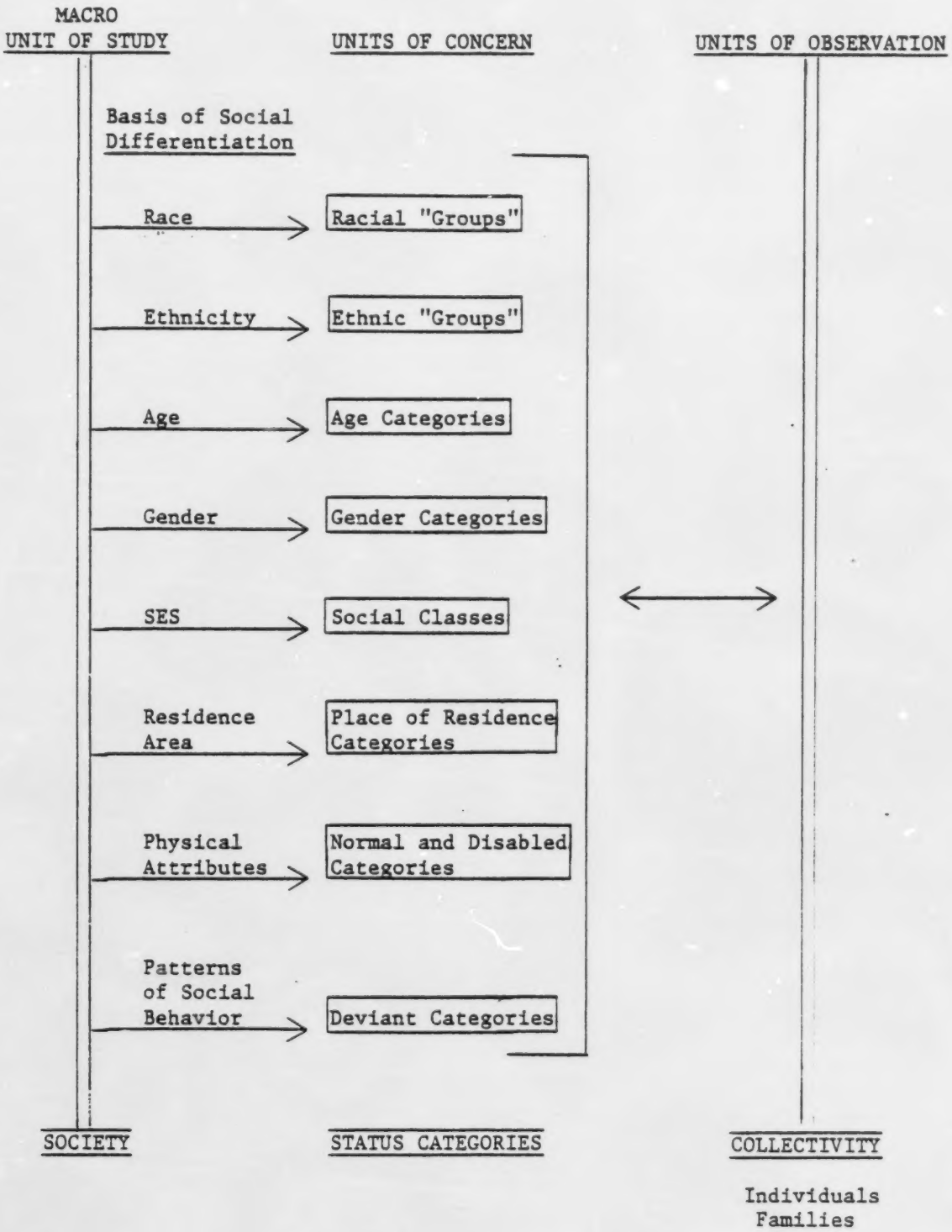
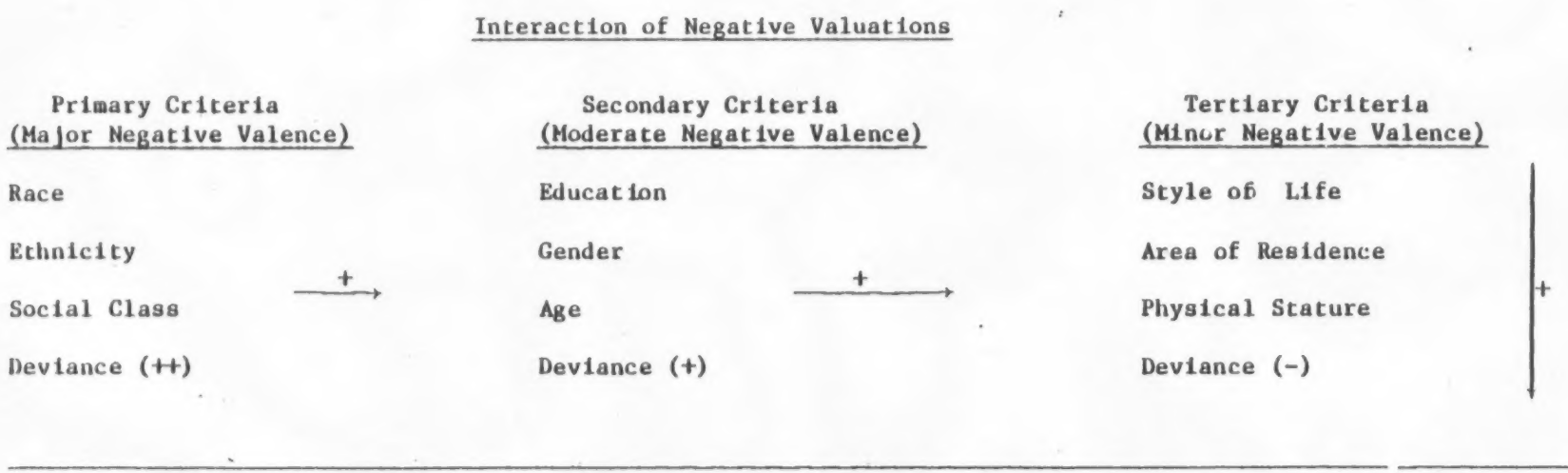


Figure 3. Social Differentiation, Status Rank, And Types Of Status Categories

	(-) Rank Evaluation (+)		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Criterion of Rank			
A. Family Based Attributes			
1. Race	Blacks	?	Whites
2. Ethnicity	Mexican-Americans	Irish - Americans	English - Americans
	"Sects"	Catholics	Protestant
3. Place of Residence	Rural	Small city	Metro suburban
	"The South"	"The Mid-West"	"The West Coast"
4. Social Class	"Poverty Class"	"Working Class"	"Middle & Upper Classes"
B. Individual Attributes			
1. Biological			
Gender	Female	?	Male
Age	Elderly	Young Adult	Middle Age
Physical Normality	Fat	Normal	Thin
Mental Normality	Retarded	Normal	Bright
2. Style of Life			
Deviance	Homosexual	?	Heterosexual
	Use of pot	?	No use of pot
	"Excon"	?	
3. Social Participation			
Deviance	H.S. Drop.	H.S. Grad	College Grad
	Sociolist Workers	?	Demo/Repub.
	Potential Minority "Groups"		

Figure 4. Negative Status Attribution as an Accumulative Process



Once the initially differentiated social categories have been subject to differential valuations they become essentially ranked units within the larger social system. These I label "status categories"; for once they are ranked they are structured relative to one another in a heirarchal manner within the organization of the society. Negative ranking thus produces Negative Status Categories ("NSC"), which almost always subjects the constiuent members to patterned ill-treatment from others operating within the society. Widespread, strongly patterned negative social prejudice and negative discrimination then reinforces through rationalizations by the dominant categories the legitimacy of the negative social honor directed toward the negative status category in the first place. Often, as we have seen from research with Blacks and other minorities in the U.S., even the members of a NSC will accept the notion of their social inferiority.

Criterion Of Social Rank: Some Comments

As of yet I am not prepared to argue anything about the comprehensiveness of universality of the particular dimensions of ranking I have listed in Figures 2 and 3: these are simply illustrative. Certainly, there are criterion of rank not included that are important in at least some societies. For instance, "color grading" when viewed independently of race is such an element (Lewis, 1980). Also, I have wraped up in one gross bundle labeled "SES" a host of perhaps somewhat independent dimensions: wealth, occupation, education, political power, and etc. Furthermore, those I have included might not be universal, particularly in reference to small, relatively isoloated social entities. Still, the ones I have listed I feel are directly relevant for our society at present, and probably for other similar ones. A more thorough and empirically grounded treatment of alternatives in this regard is a task that will need to be done.

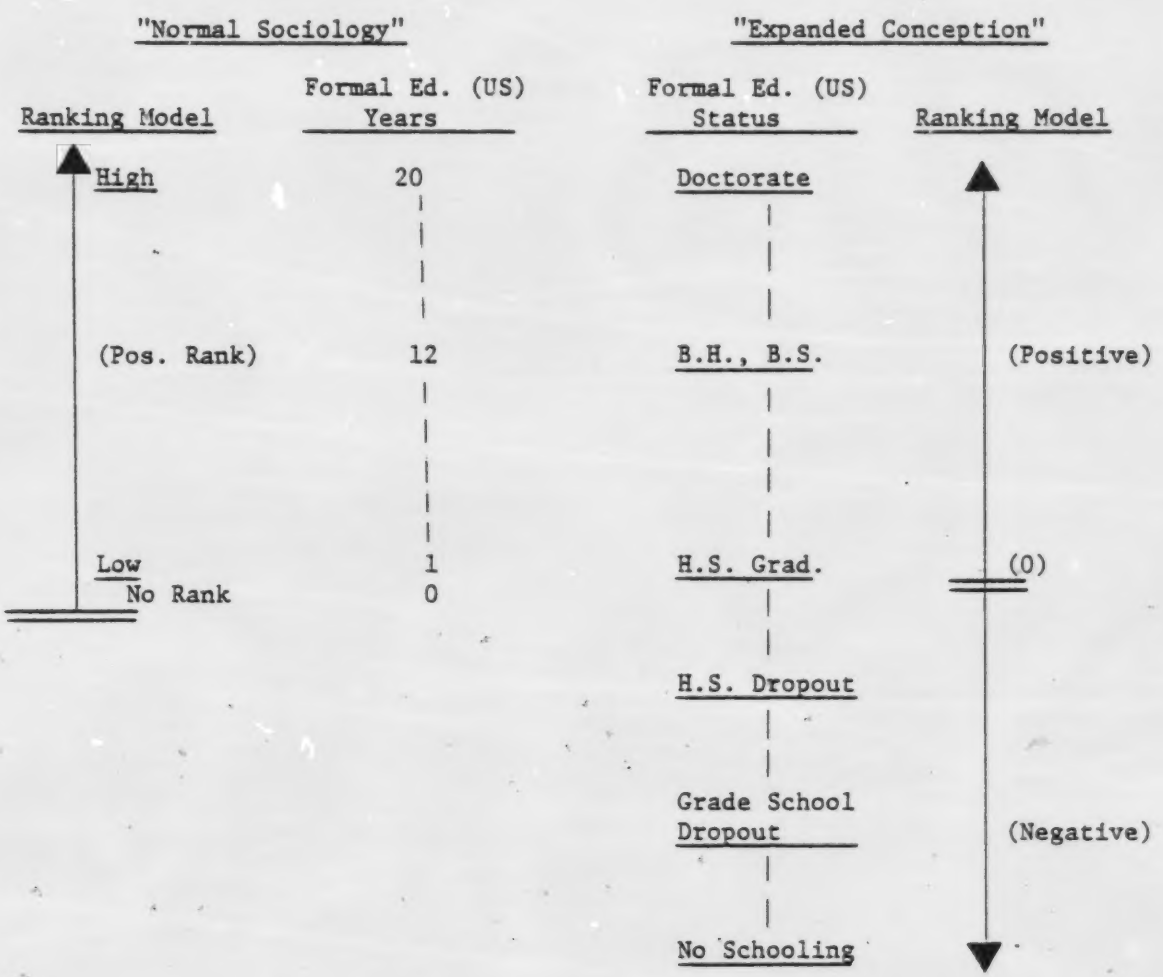
The notion of variability in the strength of negative rank associated with particular criterion incorporated in Figure 4 is, I think, an important consideration. My specific classifications in this regard, however, are purely hypothetical and open to empirical evaluation. From the subjective point of view of individuals stigmatized or negatively evaluated and suffering ill treatment as a consequence, the source of their pain is going to be viewed as of "primary" signifance.

Negative Rank

Perhaps the key idea in this entire conceptual effort is the notion that the basic constituent elements of the collectivity of a social unit are not just ranked in terms of some measure of positive social honor (i.e., more or less) but that they are also ranked in terms of characteristics carrying negative value or social stigma. This negative status ranking directly reduces social honor and produces an impression of reduced social worth. A significant, substantial, relatively enduring reduction in this regard can be called "social stigma."[3] Labels are used in a widespread manner to tag people stigmatized thus: "dropout", "crazy", "excon", "pervert", and etc. In Figure 5 I offer a diagramtic comparison of the usual conceptualization of social stratification by sociologists as contrasted with the one I propose as more adequetely reflecting social reality illustrated with years of formal education as a criterion of rank (in the U.S.).

As was mentioned before and as I have attempted to diagramaticly illustrate in Figure 4 singular negative evaluations produce social ranks that can be accumulative in nature. The negative evaluations can be compounded to produce a stronger or greater negative social ranking than could be accounted for by the use of only one singular criterion of rank. This is

Figure 5. The "Normal Sociology" Conception of Social Ranking Compared With The Expanded Conception, Including Negative Ranking



analagous to incrementally increasing the social burden an in individual must carry by adding progressively to the baggage of stigma he must handle as he is subjected to each additional criterion of negative evaluation. If this is a reasonable assertion, the sum of compounded negative status carried by an individual should bear some relationship to both his or her feelings about the self and the way they relate to others at varing levels of social organization within the society. The fact that this phenomenon becoming increasingly recognized by social scientists is clearly evidenced in the number of books being produced which focus on the particular problems of specific categories of women in our society who share in common another negative status element - "Chicanos" (Melville-1980), "Black Women", "Lesbians", "Divorced Women", and etc.[4]

The institutionalization of particular negative status categories when viewed collectively as part of the social structures of society act like funnels of negative feeling and social activity directing flows of ill-will toward targets in the collectivity. Some of the targets over-lap and consequently get heavier doses of perjorative treatment than others. Some families and individuals are located structurally in such unfortunate circumstances that they are caught at the intersections of a number of targets: these are the truely Stigmatized in our society. Think of a Black teen-ager from a poor family who droped out of school in the early grades, and has a criminal record for instance. Or, think of a mentally retarded child of an illegal migrant family from Mexico now residing as laborers on a large ranch in the rural Southwest as another example of this compounded negative status. Yes, I sincerely believe that negative social rankings are accumulative and that this fact importantly influences variability in the critical life chances among people in a society.

Negative Rank And Perjorative Treatment

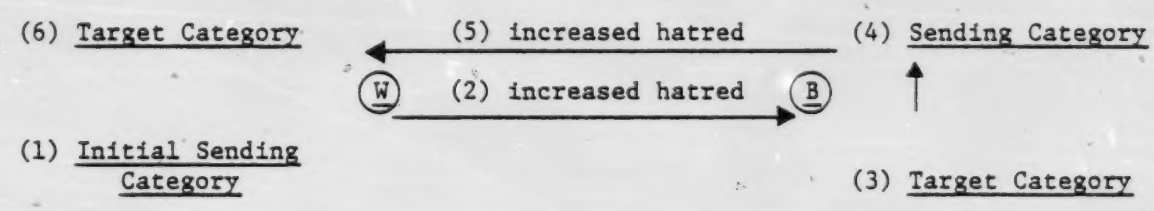
The real significance of negative status, and particularly social stigma, is its apparent tendency to be coupled with patterns of perjorative treatment-patterns of negative social prejudice and social discrimination. This is what I have labeled "structural inhumanity."

Probably from the beginning of human social activity those in a community stigmatized by the others because they were disfigured, inept in carrying out their assigned roles, or viewed as abnormal, deviant, or inferior in some other way have been victimized by the negative sentiments and harmfull actions of others in the community. I don't believe this is an inherent human trait encoded in our genetic structures, however, at the same time, it appears to be a pervasive, if not universal, characteristic of social entities (van den Berghe, 1974: 18-19). To admit this dark side of structured human social behavior provides us with the opportunity to understand it and perhaps meliorate its consequences. I don't think this is an idealistic stance; for I am sure it is possible, though difficult for sure.

The apparent natural flow of perjorative treatment from negative social ranking may be rationalized as a form of sanctioning undesirable human elements in the minds of those administering or supporting the ill-treatment. But, more likely, these patterns persist without conscious reflection by the actors involved as they practice what they have learned to be traditional, approved ways of behaving from their parents, priests, and teachers. In other words, these actions are defined as legitimate and even normatively expected by the dominant forces. For instance, I was taught as a Catholic child that all Protestants were evil and doomed to hell; therefore, I should stay away from them. Certainly I believed these things at the time; and, I had no trouble avoiding friendships with Protestants. Perhaps, I even

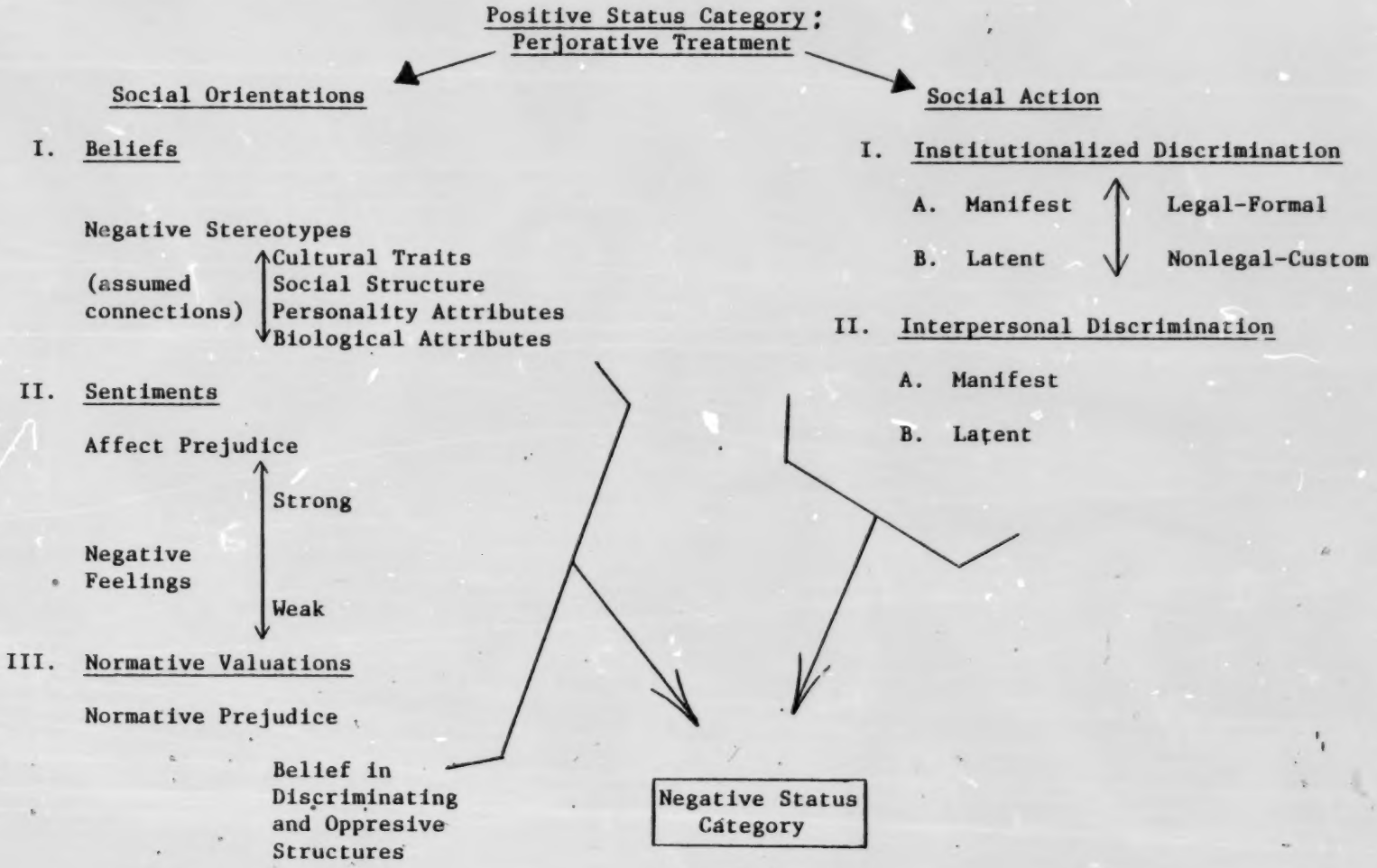
participated in ridiculing Protestant kids -- if so I have repressed the memories.

The structured inhumanity coupled with negative social status categories comes in two major forms: negative social prejudice and negative social discrimination (Figure 6). A lot of sociological attention has been focused on these phenomena during the past several decades.[5] And, I think we have gained considerable understanding of them and their probable causes and consequences. In Figure 6 as a way of describing more exactly the empirical content of these phenomena I have presented a brief overview of the particular forms of each of these. While a thorough discussion of prejudice and discrimination is not possible here, and would go far beyond my needs for this paper, it is important to point out that a thorough understanding of these patterns, the nature of their interpenetrations, and what factors influence these is essential to understanding negative social status and its structural persistence. Certainly, these patterns provide apparent rationales for legitimizing the negative ranking of those subjected to them in the minds of others. What is more, social prejudice and discrimination are by definition reciprocal processes: negative prejudices and negative acts directed from one status category toward another will be reciprocated in some measure.[6] I demonstrate this below, using affect prejudice between Blacks and Whites in the U.S.:



Obviously then any attempt to generally improve human relationships within any social context will of necessity have to attempt to reduce existing negative prejudices and patterns of discrimination.

Figure 6. Structured Oppression Of Negative Status Categories



Negative Status And Minority Groups

The notion of "minority group" evolved originally as a way of putting a special label on racial and ethnic units which were negatively ranked and subordinate to another such unit within a society. In the recent past the criterion of location in a power relationship - subordination - has appeared to be the prime defining characteristic of a minority ethnic or racial group. However, over the last decade or so we have progressively broadened the use of the term to include other so-called "groups" subjected to widespread, patterned injustice, inequalities, and ill treatment: "women", "the elderly", and "the handicapped" are good examples of this. In the process of this broadening of the scope of meaning of the term, minority group, we implicitly shifted the emphasis of the critical defining characteristic from subordinate position to negative social rank and perjorative treatment. At any rate, this is the way I understand what has happened in our use of the term. Subordinate racial and ethnic units are still included as falling under this label because obviously subordinate status produces negative status evaluation and patterned perjorative treatment. But the way we have used the term "minority group" to analyze macro units has caused serious problems for our achieving accurate understanding of intergroup relations and, I'm afraid, has misled nonsociologists about the nature of interracial, interethnic, and intergroup problems within society. Negative Status Categories are not necessarily, or even usually, internally organized social entities: an idea usually implied to sociologist and nonsociologist alike when we use the term "Group."

Recently, anthropologist, George Hicks (1977: 9-12) has called clear attention to the ambiguous way we in sociology tend to use the term "Ethnic group" to include both internally organized and cohesive social units and, at the same time, simple categories of people having one or more character-

istics in common and constituting a part of a larger population. He suggests the need to treat these two kinds of units as distinctly different aspects of reality because one important question or issue to be addressed in ethnic studies is how and why an ethnic category can become an organized group. I believe he has a very good argument and I agree with him in this regard for several reasons as follows:

(1) They represent two clearly different aspects of reality and confounding these can only produce confusion, not understanding.

(2) Historical dynamics can transform ethnic categories into ethnic groups, or, ethnic groups into status categories and these transformations have important consequences for the collection of people involved and for the larger society.

When we treat "ethnic group" as a unit of a larger macro entity we are in fact dealing with what Hicks labels an "Ethnic category." It is important that we become aware of this to prevent the all too apparent tendency to "reify" our conceptions along the lines of the connotations the term "group" carries for us: relative homogeneity in ways of life, values, orientations and interests plus internal organization. At least in some societies and some times many so-called "ethnic minority groups" do not possess these characteristics. For example, when we speak of Mexican Americans in the U.S. we are referring to an "ethnic category" within the larger population: a category of people sharing a common sense of historical origin or treated by others as having a common historical origin. At the macro level this social entity is not organized, nor do all the members of this collectivity share a common "subculture" (i.e., "The Mexican American Subculture").[7] The label Mexican American embraces diverse sets of local populations, families, and individuals differing in many ways in varying degrees (Kuvlesky, 1979 B).

Reading textbook presentations of how interethnic or interracial group relationships operate one gets the impression that we have well defined blobs of different colored putties merging, fusing or bumping off each other. Early notions of interracial contact and Greeley's more recent notion of ethnogenesis each fit this characterization in that they assume relatively well-defined, individually separated, cohesive, and homogeneous "group" entities engaging each other within the larger context of society.[8] My experience in researching ethnic and racial groupings of the U.S. population lead me to question these notions. Milton Gordon's and Feagin's notions, while perhaps better addressing the complexity of actual reality in this regard in respect to viewing intergroup processes as involving a number of dimensions, still tend to assume the existence of "groups."[9] All the above imply, or at least do not clearly deny, that the subunits of society involved in these interpenetrating frames are boundary differentiated, self-concious, internally organized entities sharing common social status, attributes, and interests. The desire of social analysts to want to view ethnic, racial, or minority units as organized subunits of a society is motivated out of a need to simplify reality to facilitate analysis of macro units. This makes it easy to talk in broad sweeping fashion about simple intergroup relations (i.e., conflict, accomodations, and etc.) and about transformations in these. One easily can imagine, also, how an assumption of homogeneity regarding the intergroup goals of members of a "minority group" will simplify one's task in portraying a relationship of these to "majority group policies" (Simpson and Yinger, 1965: 20-25). How ever much utility such assumptions may have for analysis, they misrepresent the nature of social reality and, therefore, are misleading and quite likely harmfull.

"Minority Group" Redefined

A useful definition of "minority" group might be one that considers as problematic the extent to which the social entity being referred to is homogeneous in its constituent members and the extent to which it is internally organized to achieve common ends. A definition that satisfies these needs follows:

A "minority group" is simply a social category involving a subpopulation differentiated clearly within a larger collectivity on the basis of some common set of characteristics, which are negatively evaluated by the dominant members of the collectivity and which, as a consequence, have the following additional characteristics.

(1) Experience as a collectivity perjorative treatment (i.e., patterned negative prejudice and social discrimination).

(2) Members are sensitized to their common negative status and patterns of ill treatment (i.e., share a common social identity and group awareness).

(3) Have evolved to some extent visible leaders and interest organizations (i.e., "Minority Leaders" and "Minority Organizations") which attempt to represent the interests of the category as they interpret it.

Nonethnic status categories such as "Women", "Teenagers", "Aged", and "the Disabled" fall within this definition. Also, obviously many, even most, of those social categories we label ethnic and racial "groups" fit this definition and thereby can be labeled Minority Groups.

At the societal level of social organization it is unlikely that any minority group is fully organized or even organized to a great extent in the sense that all or most members are joined together by structured patterns of behavior and oriented toward common goals. More likely only very small proportions of the total category will be involved in any given organizational unit desiring to espouse and represent the minority group's interests in the larger context. Often several or a number of such "minority group organiza-

tions" evolve and compete for membership simultaneously. And it is not unusual for them to differ in how they perceive the minority group's interest or in the goals they establish for the ideal state of majority-minority group relations (Figure 7). Such differences can produce internal discord among the members of these categories and even extreme hostilities and conflicts. Still the variability in the goals of competing minority group organizations simply reflects the diversity of interests, views, and aspirations existing among those who are included in the social category. The inability to achieve social solidarity and a consensus toward desired ends prevents the minority group from quickly disolving itself by breaking the structural chains of negative status that define its very being.[10]

There is no particular inherent significance in what we choose to define as or label a "minority group." It is simply a marker that designates a particular stage of indefinite time in the potential life cycle of a Negative Status Category within a society. Some "NSCs" seem to have always been with us, others have recently emerged, and others have ceased to be or are withering away. I try to summarize my understanding of these dynamics in unit transformations in Figure 8. Clearly NSCs can die. Better yet, they need not be born.

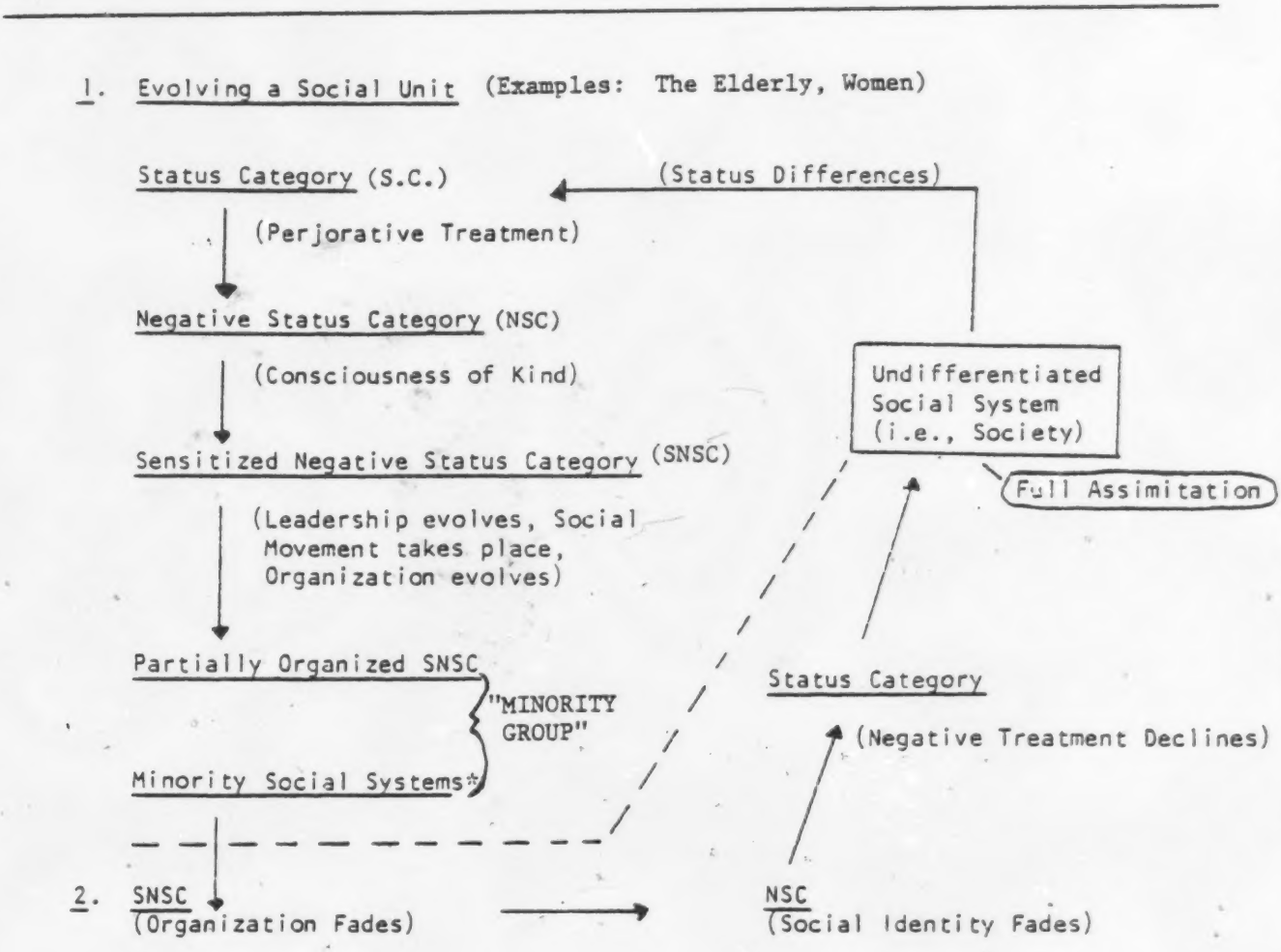
As Humanist Sociologists one of our primary commitments within our sociological role should be to initiate thought and research on the nature of the processes from which Negative Status Categories evolve and disolve. These understandings will provide us with the tools we need to at least decrease the amount of structured inhumanity existing in our societies and communities.[11] If one wonders why so many humanists have strong interests in studying particular minority groups, it is because many are already working hard toward this end.

Figure 7. Types of Minority Group Organization Goals For Desired Form Of Intergroup Contact.

Forms of Potential Majority - Minority Unit Relations*	Goals of Minority - Group Organizations
(1) Isolation	
A. Full	Separatism
B. Regulated Partial	
(2) Interaction	
A. Dominant-subordinate (Competition-Conflict)	Passive Acceptance
B. Equalitarian (Cooperative-Fraternal)	Activism (Civil Rights)
(3) Social Fusion	
A. Partial	Pluralism
B. Full	"Assimilation"

*I think of the three major distinctions noted here as "states of social contact", representing how two postulated social units stand in relationship to each other in social space. They can be visualized as existing along a continuum stretching from absolutely no contact to complete fusion and loss of separate identities.

Figure 8. Dynamics in Nature of Status Category Type Transformations.



Examples:
Irish-American, Italian-American

This second part refers to the Detioration of "Minority Groups" and their eventual termination.

*"Minority Communities", "Minority Organization", or Coalitions of Minority Systems.

FOOTNOTES

(1) By analytical structures I mean such structural categories as norms, status-roles, social power, and etc. (Loomis, 1960). The notion of institutional orders commonly used as a framework for organizing introductory textbooks in sociology simply consists of another array of analytical categories derived from structural complexes assumed to meet requisite functions of society.

(2) These types of units can be viewed as "concrete" components, as distinct from analytical ones (Ballard, 1980). Levels of organization refer to the range of inclusiveness and complexity of social entities captured in the notions of macro vs micro perspectives in sociology (i.e., society vs an interpersonal relationship). Functionally specific units refer to the various kinds of concrete social organizations that exist (i.e., armies, schools, churches, cliques, families, and etc.)

(3) This is in keeping with the usuage of the term stigma by Erving Goffman (1963: pp. 2-5).

(4) I don't mean to infer that only doubly stigmatized women represent foci for special attention; although I think the feminist movement within ethnic and other social categories has produced the most general awareness of compounded negative statues. I have tried to generate awareness of this phenomenon relative to youth (i.e., "Rural Youth", "Black Youth", and "Mexican American Youth."

(5) See Bahr, et. al. (1979) for a relatively thorough and current overview of research in this regard relative to American ethnic groups.

(6) For instance, research we have done at Texas A&M on East Texas Black populations clearly demonstrate that at least some Blacks do have strong prejudices toward local Whites, who the Black subjects perceive to be strongly prejudiced toward them (Kuvlesky, 1977).

(7) A number of analysts have come to the conslusion that the notion of a singular, monolithic cultural configuration representing a Mexican American subculture is highly questionable (Grebler, et. al., 1970: 578-584; Stoddard, 1973: 96-123; Christian, 1973; Rivera, 1978; 1 and 6; Miller, 1978: 225-227). This variability is structured in part by nativity, social class, region of the U.S., and, in my opinion, "Minority-group orientations."

(8) This tendency to misplace social concreteness is not new or unique to ethnic scholars as has been pointed out clearly by Greer (1969: 76-82). It represents an unconcious "sociological realist" bias that implicityly assumes "group" characteristics of any socially significant social or status category of a larger collectivity defined as a society or large community. Warner's classical treatment of racial stratification in terms of "casts-like" structures easily leads in this direction and Greeley's model of ethnogenesis also contributes to others misconceiving racial and ethnic categories as group-like entities (Feagin, 1978: Chpt. 2; Dworkin and Dworkin, 1976: Chpt. 3).

(9) In my judgment the desire to deal with ethnic groups as organized subunits of a society to facilitate macro analysis lead both Gordon (1964) and Feagin (1978) into a process of treating ethnic and racial categories as though they were well organized social entities.

(10) The factioning of the La Raza Unida Party in Texas, and its subsequent decline in political significance during the mid-seventies, is a very concrete example of how differing "minority group orientations" among Mexican Americans can generate destructive hostility and conflict among members of a minority group. Of course, the dominant social category can be expected to do what ever they can to foster such situations if they perceive a threat to their interest (Miller, 1975).

(11) In my Presidential Address to the AHS last year I briefly sketched elements of a systematic strategy aimed at eliminating or at least reducing structural inhumanity in society. I have not refined this portion of my oral presentation to the extent that I want to present it in writing yet. However, the major general needs I suggested are listed below:

1. Altering Negative Social Orientations
   a. Destroy negative stereotypes by changing beliefs.
   b. Change sentiments to eliminate negative affect prejudice - teach, preach and practice love.
   c. Change values to reorder life goals, giving primacy to humanistic rather than materialistic ends.

2. Altering Social Organization And Social Actions
   a. Make perjorative treatment of status categories a legally criminal act.
   b. Educate young people to see the huge gap existing between our cultural ideals and naked, concrete social reality.
   c. Foster an emphasis on moral courage and resistance to situational peer pressure in the socialization of our young.
   d. Use mass media constructively to portray reality accurately and work against its use for propoganda.
   e. Select leaders on the basis of moral ethics and personal courage to be humanistic, rather than on the basis of how well they can meet our self-serving, particular, special vested interests.

3. The Practice Of Sociology

   Practice a sociology that seeks truth above all else and the use of truth for the benefit of all humanity, not just for those who can pay well. Practice a sociology that gives primacy to the improvement of the human condition, and not to particular forms of ideology, theory, methods, or personal self-serving ends.

These are the broad needs. Obviously much thought needs to be given to development and implementation of specific strategies to meet them.

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